



# Neighborhood Networks

## Quarterly Consortia Conference Call

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**"Innovative Technology"**  
**June 6, 2006**

### **Conference Call Summary**

On June 6, 2006, Neighborhood Networks held the third of four quarterly consortia conference calls. The call was entitled "Innovative Technology." Two guest speakers were featured: Barry Pilgrim, Web and database solutions engineer at BCT Partners; and Steve Hargadon, founder of Hargadon Computer, Inc., a Neighborhood Networks National Partner. The guest speakers were selected to participate in the call because of their expertise on innovative technology tools and resources that Neighborhood Networks Consortia and centers can use to build the capacity of their organizations.

This call focused on innovative technology topics including how to find and implement open source software; Web 2.0, a new generation of online technologies; and strategies for building low-cost network computer labs. The Neighborhood Networks Consortia Development technical assistance staff and guest speakers provided insight into some of the many advanced technology resources that are available to Neighborhood Networks centers and consortia at low cost. The affordable solutions discussed during the call have the potential to increase the organizational capacity of centers and consortia, significantly enhance programs, and help get residents excited about utilizing technology.

### ***Highlights from the Call:***

- Barry Pilgrim discussed Web 2.0, a second generation of Web technologies that allow users to collaborate and share information online. He explained that Web 2.0 does not describe one specific technology, but rather a group of technologies and practices that enrich the online user experience. Web 2.0 includes Web applications that are designed to be similar to desktop applications and to encourage user interaction. Pilgrim emphasized that Web 2.0 is an online movement characterized by increased collaboration and information sharing between users.
- Pilgrim addressed the importance of this new generation of online technology and outlined strategies for accessing Web 2.0 sites. He highlighted a variety of sites that Neighborhood Networks centers and consortia can use to support programs and to encourage increased technology use among residents. These included Writely, a free online word processing application; Nuvvo, an eLearning site where users can participate in online courses on any subject; and Simply Hired, a job search engine that aggregates thousands of job listings from other online search engines.
- Steve Hargadon discussed how Neighborhood Networks consortia and centers can access low-cost hardware and software to increase the capacity of computer labs in any Neighborhood Networks center. He addressed how center staff can use open source software to allow computers of any age to support Web 2.0 and other advanced technologies. Hargadon provided some background information about free and open source software, which is actually the origin of much of the technology that is now part of the Web 2.0 movement. He explained that the concept of open source software is based on the philosophy that knowledge is to be shared. He further explained that open source software is highly collaborative. Anyone who accesses an open source application can build upon the

code, thereby enhancing the application. Hargadon provided examples of open source software, including Open Office, which is very similar to and highly compatible with the Microsoft Office suite.

- Hargadon also provided tips for accessing these resources and practical strategies for implementing them into center and consortia activities effectively. He explained how Linux (a free operating system), when loaded onto an old computer, can function as a server for a small computer lab, making installation and maintenance inexpensive for Neighborhood Networks centers. Hargadon informed participants that they could access notes from the conference call at <http://innovtech.pbwiki.com>, an example of a Web 2.0 site.

The speakers discussed the following online innovative technology resources that can be used to increase capacity at Neighborhood Networks centers:

#### **General**

- Wikipedia (<http://www.wikipedia.com>)

#### **Extended Web 2.0 Sites**

- Chicago Crime (<http://www.chicagocrime.org>)
- The Programmable Web (<http://www.programmableweb.com>)

#### **Web applications to replace desktop applications**

- Writely (<http://www.writely.com>)
- WriteBoard (<http://www.writeboard.com>)

#### **Collaborative Work/Communication**

- CollectiveX (<http://www.collectivex.com>)
- Skype (<http://www.skype.com>)

#### **Job Search Engines**

- Indeed (<http://www.indeed.com>)
- Simply Hired (<http://www.simplyhired.com>)

#### **eLearning**

- Nuvvo (<http://www.nuvvo.com>)

#### **Web Publishing**

- Google Pages (<http://pages.google.com>)

#### **Finding Web 2.0 Sites**

- TechCrunch (<http://www.techcrunch.com>)
- Categoriz (<http://www.categoriz.com>)

The call concluded with a general question-and-answer period for participants. An additional conference call will be held on September 12, 2006, when the topic will be "Basics in Consortia Board Development."